

# Massachusetts Cultural Council

*supporting public programs in the arts, humanities, and interpretive sciences*

## 1990 Ushers in the Massachusetts Cultural Council

Welcome to the Massachusetts Cultural Council!

On January 4, 1990, Governor Michael S. Dukakis signed into law a measure that merged the 24-year-old Council on the Arts and Humanities with the 10-year-old Arts Lottery Council. The Massachusetts Cultural Council, or MC-squared as it is becoming affectionately known, is alive and well. (The legislation creating the agency is summarized on the back cover.)

This is a magnificent opportunity for Massachusetts to continue leading the country in providing comprehensive support and direction for a very diverse cultural community and the citizens it serves. The previous councils possessed a remarkable reputation for innovation, adherence to high artistic standards, compassion for the state's artists and humanists, a commitment to cultural education and unparalleled local support in virtually every city and town of this Commonwealth. That should continue.

The budget of the Massachusetts Cultural Council, while smaller than the state arts and humanities budget of two years ago, is still significant enough to continue the major themes of the recent past.

We have much to do to constructively merge the two agencies, especially to maintain the commitment of each to its important mission. To that end, the newly-constituted Board and staff are meeting together to ensure not only a stable transition but a true marriage of those characteristics which have made each entity so vital.

The issues are manifold. There are basic day-to-day questions, such as identifying a new executive director and reconciling the staff structure. Our immediate programmatic questions consist of harmonizing existing programs that now overlap, and modifying others. We hope to resolve the longer-term philosophical questions in the coming year.

You can help. Over the next few months we will be holding public meetings in communities throughout the state to better explain the new legislation and to formulate the future of the new Council. Your participation will be crucial. The schedule is included in this newsletter. Everyone here is encouraged that the resolution of the merger will allow us to go forward with an exciting and revitalized program. We welcome your support and look forward to a stronger, more diverse and perhaps wiser cultural agency for the next decade.

*Nicholas T. Zervas*

Nicholas T. Zervas

*Walter Frazee*

Walter Frazee, Jr.

## MCC Embarks on Statewide Tour

Beginning in late February, the Massachusetts cultural community will have a most important opportunity to come together to meet the new executive director of the MCC and to discuss the newly-consolidated state agency. MCC will embark on a series of statewide, public meetings which will continue through mid-April.

These statewide meetings will herald the beginning of a long-term dialogue among personnel of MCC and the constituencies which it serves. They will also provide everyone with a forum where ideas can be shared and developed by our diverse cultural community. We welcome your attendance and urge you to participate. Please take the time to fill out the enclosed response form, letting us know what your concerns and questions are.

Over the past decade, both MCAH and MALC have been acclaimed as leaders among state arts agencies. We will bring to these meetings our collective knowledge and experiences. We are counting on you to share your knowledge and experiences with us. Join us with your vision, as we begin to shape our future.

## Governor Recommends 20% Cut for FY91

In his budget message of Jan. 24, the Governor recommended a 20% cut to the Mass. Cultural Council.

"With my long history of support I find this particularly painful," the Governor told advocates in a meeting in his office, "but the absence of new revenues gives me no choice." He urged arts advocates to work for a new revenue package.

The Governor's budget will be taken up by the House in February.

# Welcoming in the New; Farewells to the Past

I offer a message of farewell from the former Massachusetts Council on the Arts and Humanities as well as a greeting from the new Massachusetts Cultural Council. As MCAH's Acting Executive Director since September, 1989, and Deputy Director for nearly three years before that, I might paraphrase the opening of Charles Dickens' *Tale of Two Cities*: It has been the best of times; it has been the worst of times.

In 1988, the Council offered 23 funding programs, each designed to answer some area of need or leadership in the cultural community. We looked towards international cultural cooperation, bolstered support to individual artists, and fostered a new direction in private sector support.

Since that time we, like many state agencies, have been buffeted by difficult budget constraints. The funds we have to distribute to the cultural community dropped precipitously, and many programs and valued staff are no longer with the agency.

For several months, the staff and board of MCAH have looked inward, not only to restructure but to consider the work this 24-year-old cultural agency has completed in its time. As the prospects for a consolidation with our sister agency, the Massachusetts Arts Lottery Council, increased, we considered the qualities we would bring to the marriage.

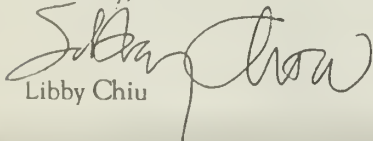
Frankly, we are buoyed by what we have achieved. For example, in the 12 years of Anne Hawley's directorship of this agency, we directed millions of dollars of basic support to the Commonwealth's broad and diverse cultural community. Hundreds of education programs entered the state's schools, in some cases replacing the arts programs lost as a result of Proposition 2-1/2. Contemporary arts initiatives, which became models for the nation, revitalized the state's impressive cultural heritage. Traditionally underserved ethnic groups were able to share their cultures through Heritage, Professional Assistance, and other programs. New alliances were formed among the state, the private sector, and the cultural community. The National Endowment for the Arts credited the Council with major steps forward in the areas of design and folklife.

Ours has been a statewide perspective, focusing on research, problem solving, experimentation, and the future.

The new Council will have an expanded potential for working within local communities. We wish to reach into each and every community, so that we can know firsthand what your unique needs are. We look forward to working with all of you.

In the coming months, as we sit down together to plan the new Council, we expect to draw upon our individual and mutual strengths and to examine our weaknesses. While we bid farewell to a valued friend, and look excitedly towards a new partnership, we know the lessons we have learned in nearly a quarter century will continue to play a major part in the cultural life of Massachusetts.

Sincerely,

  
Libby Chiu

"Meet uncertainty by emphasizing... 'world-class' quality and service," advises Tom Peters in his latest book *Thriving on Chaos*. The MALC, its staff and liaisons are convinced that the uncertainty we have and will continue to experience as part of a new agency, MCC, will offer unprecedented opportunities for beneficial growth for local arts lottery council members, and for the program itself.

During the past three years, the MALC has increased field services dramatically through the use of five community arts agencies as liaisons to local arts lottery councils. The liaisons will continue to serve you on behalf of MCC. While there are many components of the arts lottery program that are complex, and occasional problems arise in administering local arts lottery council programs, the MALC has developed resources to train and educate members, including the guidelines, a new handbook, and frequent workshops. These resources, combined with the knowledge and experience of LALC members, will continue to serve as the basis for the smooth operation of local arts lottery programs.


Now, the members, director, staff, and liaisons of MCC wish to explore our future with you. As part of a broad community of persons who create art as well as administer arts programs, you play an essential role in defining this new public agency established to stimulate and support the growth of arts, humanities and interpretive sciences.

Many of you have been working closely with other cultural groups within your city or town. Some local arts lottery councils have also worked together in their region to sponsor jointly a performance or festival. Collaborations and cooperative projects will help funds go further and provide more public benefit. We want to discuss how such strategies can build a stronger cultural community even in uncertain times.

Because the arts lottery program is unique in the nation, your participation in and contribution to this dialogue is especially valuable and necessary. Please plan to attend at least one of the meetings listed in this bulletin. If you cannot, plan to select members from your council who will go on its behalf. Discuss ahead of time the issues you feel are important to your town/city to be carried forward to a public discussion.

As MALC Chair Walter Frazee said recently, "The new agency...will oversee an unchanged Arts Lottery program... (but) we believe the new, united state agency will improve the opportunities for all our people to experience the arts and humanities." Please join us in this endeavor and participate in the exciting exploration of the next several months.

Best regards,

  
Barbara J. Garvey



# MCC Statewide Meeting Schedule

Mon Feb. 26	6:00-8:00 p.m.	South Shore Conservatory	Hingham (S)*
Tue Feb. 27	4:30-6:30 p.m.	Old Sturbridge Village	Sturbridge (C)*
Thu March 1	6:30-8:30 p.m.	The Arts Council of Franklin County	Greenfield (W)*
Tue March 6	6:00-8:00 p.m.	Milford Library Program Room	Milford (C)*
Wed March 7	4:30-6:30 p.m.	Heritage State Park	Holyoke (W)*
Wed March 14	6:30-8:30 p.m.	The Mount, Shakespeare & Company	Lenox (B)+
Thu March 15	6:30-8:30 p.m.	Jamaica Plain Multicultural Arts Center	Boston (E)*
Mon March 19	6:30-8:30 p.m.	Visitors Center, Lowell National Park	Lowell (N)*
Thu March 22	6:00-8:00 p.m.	The Culture Connection, Unitarian Church	Beverly (N)+
Mon March 26	6:00-8:00 p.m.	Levi Heywood Memorial Library	Gardner (C)*
Wed March 28	7:00-9:00 p.m.	Gus County Recreational Center	Falmouth (S)*
Wed April 4	6:30-8:30 p.m.	Kendall Center for the Arts	Belmont (E)
Thu April 5	7:00-9:00 p.m.	Harvard Public Library, Hapgood Room	Harvard (N)*
Wed April 11	5:00-7:00 p.m.	Williams College Museum	Williamstown (B)*
Thu April 12	6:30-8:30 p.m.	Old Town Hall	Berkley (S)*
Tue April 17	5:00-7:00 p.m.	Brewster Council on Aging	Brewster (S)*
Wed April 18	4:30-6:30 p.m.	G.A.R. Building, 55 Pearl Street	Worcester (C)+
Tue April 24	6:30-8:30 p.m.	Y.M.C.A., Robie Room	Chelsea (E)

\* Handicapped accessible; +Handicapped accessible upon prior notification; every effort will be made to make all meeting sites accessible.

For further information and/or directions, contact the liaison responsible for the region hosting your workshop:

(North) Andrea Olin-Gomes, Margo Giroux (508) 448-3001  
 (South) Robert Olivia (617) 749-4014;  
 (East) Netta Davis (617) 524-3816;  
 (Central) Sylvia Cuomo (508) 799-1994;  
 (West)(Berkshires) Dyan Wiley, Vanessa Kam (413) 545-2360.

## You Are Invited!

Please complete and return the following information, regardless of whether you will be able to attend one of the meetings. Send to:

Massachusetts Cultural Council, 80 Boylston Street, 10th floor, Boston, MA 02116

- ☐ I will be attending the \_\_\_\_\_ (location) meeting on \_\_\_\_\_ (date).
- ☐ I will be representing the \_\_\_\_\_ (organization/council).
- ☐ Listed below are my questions/concerns.

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- ☐ Our organization/council, the \_\_\_\_\_ would be pleased to host a future MCC meeting or local area network meeting. Please contact me at \_\_\_\_\_ to discuss further.  
 (phone number)

# A Closer Look at H6472, the Budget Amendment

On January 4, 1990, the Governor signed into law House Bill 6472, a budget amendment including the restructuring of the state's support to its 32,000 artists, 1,500 non-profit cultural institutions, and 335 local arts lottery councils.

Looking to the future, this House-Senate compromise combines two complementary agencies, the Massachusetts Council on the Arts and Humanities and the Massachusetts Arts Lottery Council into the Massachusetts Cultural Council. This new agency has the ability to survey the entire state for its continued health and growth, while reaching into virtually every community to provide support.

SECTIONS 14, 15, 16, and 196 of H6472 create the new agency as of January 1, 1990. Sub-sections 52-55 restate the original legislation of the MCAH; sub-sections 56-58 are from the original MALC legislation. Following is a summary of the contents:

SECTION 14 repeals the previous version of the MCAH.

SECTION 15: Section 52 creates the 15-member Massachusetts Cultural Council (MCC), whose members are to be well-versed in interpretive sciences or

local arts in addition to the arts and humanities. MCC is under the Treasurer's Office (as was MALC) but not subject to its control. (MCAH was under Administration and Finance.)

Section 53 mandates the agency to stimulate and encourage the arts, humanities and interpretive sciences in the public interest.

Section 54 requires the agency to develop cultural institutions and organizations in the interest of citizens and allows it to establish guidelines, hold hearings and enter into contracts.

Section 55 establishes the new Council as the sole agency for the administration of the National Foundation on the Arts and Humanities Act of 1965.

Sections 56-58 restate the language of the arts lottery legislation with several notable changes. The deadlines are no longer stated in law; the Council now has the power to set them. Arts lottery councils need not apply for their allocation in order to enable the Council to retain it for their use. Regional arts lottery councils may choose to have proportional instead of equal representation. The PASS program is included in this legislation

and the MCC is now able to set the maximum ticket price.

SECTION 16 repeals the previous version of the MALC.

SECTION 196 continues the duties and obligations of the MALC and the MCAH to the new Massachusetts Cultural Council, including rulings, regulations, contracts, etc. It also continues the existing obligations of local or regional arts lottery councils.

The budget amendment also merged the administrative accounts of the MALC and MCAH but kept separate the program funds: \$5 million for local arts lottery councils and \$11.2 million for arts, humanities, and interpretive science programs. Program funds were not cut beyond this fiscal year's already-substantial reductions, but administrative funds were further reduced by 21% for the remaining six months of the fiscal year.

The MCC has appointed a working committee of board members and staff to facilitate the merger of the two bodies. An executive director is expected to be named by mid-February and will be introduced to the field through a series of visits across the state during succeeding months.

*Massachusetts Cultural Council*  
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# Massachusetts Cultural Council

July 1990

supporting public programs in the arts, humanities, and interpretive sciences

## The Continuing Crisis Means Changes for MCC

I join the Massachusetts Cultural Council with a daunting task. On the one hand, MCC through its two components has amassed an enviable reputation of support in many diverse areas: education, contemporary arts, basic operating and project support, private sector partnerships and community arts.

On the other hand, MCC's budget has been reduced significantly because of the present fiscal crisis facing the Commonwealth. Its budget has been slashed by 40% and we may face another drastic reduction in the fiscal year beginning July 1. Many valued staff have left the agency and many cultural organizations are confused about the future of government support to the arts, humanities and sciences.

Many community groups wonder if they will exist next year; larger budget institutions with internationally famous collections worry about being unable to serve schoolchildren. I have talked to legislators besieged by tax cutters as well as applicants for state funds. I have talked to my own new staff, many of whom are numbed by the instability of the agency they have labored so hard to make great.

Interesting way to begin a new job.

Like my distinguished predecessor at the Council, Anne Hawley, I have a vision which I hope to work toward during my tenure here. It is one strongly molded by the concerns and issues I have heard in just the few short months I have spent preparing for this job.

The events of the past few years call for change. The agency must adapt to smaller budgets while offering leadership, support and other types of assistance to the cultural community. All of us — artists, scientists, and humanists, institutions and MCC alike — must direct our energies to serving those sectors of our society that are struggling with the effects of this budget crisis.

The details of our reorganization plan will be presented and discussed with you in the coming months. We hope you will assist us in creating a responsive and innovative agency.

—Mary Anne Piacentini, Executive Director

## House Budget Debate Reduces Funding; Adds Restrictive Language

The House-proposed budget for the Massachusetts Cultural Council elicited both sighs of relief and expressions of pain when it was first unveiled in May. By the end of the three-week-long House debate, cultural advocates had another problems about which to worry.

The initial relief came simply because the Council was included in the House Ways and Means Committee proposal; in its last two budget proposals, the Committee had recommended the agency's elimination.

Relief was short-lived though. House Ways and Means proposed, and the full House agreed to, a 43% cut to the agency's \$17.3 million budget. The new budget would be \$9.93 million. If passed and signed by the Governor,

this would represent a 64% cut from the agency's FY88 budget.

Of at least equal concern, and more unexpectedly, the House adopted an amendment by Rep. Thomas Finneran of Boston that would apply standards for state grant giving that go beyond the restrictions recently placed on the National Endowment for the Arts. The amendment would prohibit the Council from supporting in any way an artist or organization that "produces, promotes, creates, displays, disseminates, or exhibits" works of art violating the state's obscenity statutes or that depict sexual exploitation of children.

While the Council states emphatically that it has never supported either, new director Mary Anne

Piacentini was quick to express concern about an amendment so vague and one that would remove *all* funding from an organization, even if it funds a controversial exhibit from private sources. According to the *Boston Herald*, Rep. Finneran wrote the amendment with an eye toward the Mapplethorpe exhibit coming to Boston's Institute of Contemporary Arts in August.

Both the budget and the amendment now go to the Senate for its debate, expected in mid- to late-June, then to a Conference Committee to hammer out differences between the two versions, and finally to the Governor. The new fiscal year begins July 1.



# While Some Things Change, Others Remain the Same

*As the Massachusetts Cultural Council plans for change, both the statewide programs and the local arts lottery councils are continuing to offer funding programs for the cultural community:*

**T**he Mass. Cultural Council has always supported non-profit cultural institutions in two ways: basic support, to help groups with the costs of developing cultural resources; and project support, for specific initiatives or productions.

Both categories were strategically designed to help cultural organizations in a manner that would best serve them.

Basic support funding always accounted for roughly 40% of our funding; the primary vehicle was Merit Aid. Funding for projects, on the other hand, could be requested through more than 15 different programs including, for example, education, art exchange, conservation, and technical assistance.

To maintain a balance between these two forms of support and to ensure that some priorities of the agency do not experience any discontinuity, the Council has chosen to run several programs this year, even as it considers a major redesign of the agency, and even as the funding remains unstable:

- **Merit Aid:** the Council will extend Merit Aid for a third year to current grantees. While MCC hopes to limit disruption to the nearly 450 groups we support, budget cuts must be passed along. Similarly, if the budget cut is as severe as that proposed by the House, second year commitments for programs begun in FY90 may not be fully funded.

- **Education:** The Council each year expects to spend a third of its program budget for educational pursuits. The programs have been consolidated this year, but still include support to collaborations among cultural institutions, community organizations and schools, and a variety of artists in schools residencies (through the Cultural Education Collaborative). The Council's continuing goal is to spend at least 75% of its education funds in low-income areas of the state. The deadline for submitting applications was in April, and grants should be announced this summer.

- **Cultural Pluralism:** Enthusiastically affirming its commitment to cultural diversity, the Council merged its Heritage and Folklife programs to promote values that enable the public to benefit from the experiences of diverse racial, regional, and ethnic groups. The deadline was also in April.

- **Support to Individual Artists:** The Council is maintaining its commitment to the Commonwealth's finest artists by offering \$10,000 fellowships (up from \$9,500) through the Artists Foundation (617-227-2737). Because of the Council's greatly diminished budget, however, the fellowship program will alternate disciplines eligible for funding from year to year.

- **Private Sector Partnerships:** With the state's increasing inability to provide former levels of support, it has become even more critical that new relationships be forged among the cultural, political, and business communities. New initiatives in business funds have already been developed in Franklin County, Springfield, Boston, Newton, and Worcester. The deadline is mid-October for proposals.

**A**s we go to press, arts lottery and PASS grants are being reviewed by the Arts Lottery Program Subcommittee; grant awards will be announced by the end of June.

Spring 1990, the ALP's first cycle as part of the Massachusetts Cultural Council, ran "business as usual." The agency received more than 3,300 applications totalling nearly \$3 million, and another 1,300 PASS applications totalling a half-million dollars.

The legislation creating the new agency changes some aspects of the arts lottery structure, eliminating some of the original legislative constraints, while granting the MCC greater flexibility in administering the local programs.

On the stable side of things, the duties and obligations of both the agency as a whole and the local/regional arts lottery councils themselves are continued. To guarantee that stability, the new 15-member MCC includes all the previous MALC members, who now form the Arts Lottery Program Subcommittee.

While the Council adhered to its traditional May 1 deadline for both PASS and arts lottery grant applications, the law no longer specifies May 1 and November 1 deadlines. MCC, therefore, has the authority to determine new deadlines and to grant funds to be held over for LALCs which have not applied for their allocation prior to ALP deadlines. Also, for the first time, PASS has been incorporated into the enabling legislation.

The new mandate offers some flexibility to the regional councils too. Previously they were required to have an equal number of members appointed from each city or town within the consortium. The new legislation offers regional councils the option to adopt "a proportional membership consistent with the population of each municipality," but requires at least one member from each municipality, and that the option be approved by a two-thirds vote of the regional arts lottery council itself.

And, in case readers know people who would like to donate money to the MCC, it is allowed to "accept gifts, contributions, and bequests of funds from individuals, foundations, and from federal, state or other governmental bodies," which only the former MCAH was permitted to do.

While maintaining the integrity of the ALPs, this legislation offers local/regional councils an exciting opportunity to further evolve. Used to its fullest, the legislation can serve as a catalyst, fostering greater involvement and contributions by local councils to the cultural lives of their respective communities.

*Special Note:* Several years of support to the historic Isaac Royall House by the Medford Arts Lottery Council has helped contribute to the House's upcoming special event: placement on a commemorative U.S. postal card in June!

## OPINION: The Continuing Debate over Government Support of Culture

*We fully recognize that no government can call artistic excellence into existence. It must flow from the quality of the society and the good fortune of the nation. Nor should any government seek to restrict the freedom of artists to pursue his/her calling in his/her own way. Freedom is an essential condition for the artist and in proportion as freedom is diminished so is the prospect of artistic achievement.*

Public debate about government support of culture in the United States has been with us for some time. Some of the most eloquent arguments for its existence, though, surrounded the decision to establish the National Endowment for the Arts some 25 years ago. The words above, for example, were utilized by President Lyndon Johnson during a 1965 discussion addressing the use of federal tax dollars to support cultural activities.

If the last two years are any indication, the passage of time has not dulled the sharpness of debate, nor the willingness of the cultural community to take on those who challenge the value and meaning of culture.

During the past year, we have witnessed attempts to eliminate both federal and state support despite 25 years of successes. Champions of both agencies have been forced to revisit the arguments that justify not only government support but the very existence of cultural activity in schools and communities. Attention was fo-

cused on the place of culture in society as well as on the need to create. Debaters have expanded their discussion to include the limits on free expression in a democratic society, including the consideration of what is appropriate for a museum to hang on its walls.

The quality of the discussion is not always sound.

As Massachusetts legislators currently debate the relative priority of arts funding in relation to other state needs, the nation continues to focus on Andres Serrano and Robert Mapplethorpe whose works have become vehicles for battling political ideologies. Unfortunately the significance of their art has been lost in debate characterized

by distortions and inflammatory comments.

As a result, for the first time in its history, the NEA is liable for restricting content, something long considered as anathema to its purpose. And the NEA, NEH and IMS are being scrutinized in hearings which may well ultimately determine their respective fates, purely as a result of these debates.

On the positive side, however, the debate around these issues has revealed some healthy questions — and answers — about the nature and support of culture, questions which are stimulating the cultural community to act politically. Last fall, more than 350 people joined together for a symposium entitled "Culture Shock: Facing the Crisis." And organizations such as Mobius and the Mass. Cultural Alliance have continued to provide meeting places and clearing-houses for such discussions.

The cultural community is emerging from these various crises with a new sense of its power, ability, and responsibility to impact on the political process.

Many questions remain unanswered in this ongoing debate, but in order to assure the continuation of government support for the arts, humanities, and interpretive sciences, those who are in favor must make a convincing case for support without restriction. We must arm ourselves for what promises to be many more years of discussion.

### NEFA Hosts Frohnmayer

The New England Foundation for the Arts (NEFA) hosted the first official visit of John Frohnmayer, NEA chairman, earlier this year, to introduce him to some of the region's cultural leaders and artistic institutions.

His 36-hour visit to metropolitan Boston included meeting with the NEFA Board (which includes the directors of the six New England state arts agencies); addressing 300 members of the cultural community at the MIT List Visual Arts Centers; and talking with corporate leaders, arts education specialists, artistic directors of cultural institutions, and the press.

He also toured the Museum of the National Center for Afro-American Artists, Boston's Children's Museum, the Institute of Contemporary Art, Symphony Hall, the Museum of Fine Arts and the New England Conservatory of Music.

Throughout his visit, Mr. Frohnmayer solicited comments and suggestions on ways the National Endowment for the Arts could better serve the nation's artists, arts institutions, and audiences, and he discussed several new strategies for enhancing the Endowment's resources and impact. In his remarks at the List Visual Arts Center, he shared his view that the arts have a vital and important role to play in shaping the country's future. He noted his concern that more attention be paid to cultural diversity, access to the arts in rural communities, arts education, international cultural exchange, and the bolstering of support for our important cultural institutions.

While not diminishing the seriousness of the current debate on the reauthorization of the Endowment and its decision-making systems, he indicated great confidence in the prospects for cultural endeavor in the United States. "Creativity will be the currency of trade in the 21st century," he said, "and the arts are at the very center of this nation's creativity."



# NEA Controversy Continues Threat to Agency

The on-going controversy surrounding censorship and the arts (some of which has touched Massachusetts directly, see Page 1 article) has threatened the very existence of the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA), National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH), and the Institute for Museum Services (IMS), all of whom are up for reauthorization.

At the end of April, the House and Senate Subcommittee on Education, Arts, and Humanities completed two months of nationwide hearings, including testimony by prominent members of the cultural community, politically active constituents, and members of the legal community. In a see-saw discus-

sion that has everyone uneasy, Congress continues to compose the reauthorization bill, and debate is expected to continue throughout the summer.

Intermingled with the reauthorization debate is the annual budget appropriation process. President George Bush stated that he supports restriction-free reauthorization, but he has recommended only a slight increase in funding, inadequate given inflation and the minimal funding increases over his predecessor's previous allocations.

The Massachusetts Congressional Delegation has a strong history of advocating for the arts and humanities, and their support was stalwart in the heated debates last spring and summer.

You can show your support for the NEA, NEH, and IMS by calling for reauthorization without restrictions on content, and for increasing the proposed appropriations by

- writing the state's Congressional Delegation and specifying how federal arts and humanities support is critical to your work;

- encouraging your board and membership to add their voices;

- mentioning the reauthorization and budget battles in your organization's publications;

- calling the Emergency Campaign to Save the Arts, 1-900-226-ARTS. For \$4.50 they will send individual mailgrams to your senators and reps.

## MCC Staff Hear from Cultural Community Across State

The Massachusetts cultural community spoke out in every region of the state at a lengthy list of statewide public meetings chaired by MCC's Libby Chiu and Barbara Garvey. Heralding the beginning of a long-term dialogue among cultural administrators and the constituencies which MCC serves, these meetings provided a forum for sharing a broad range of ideas and concerns.

Most frequently voiced was the need for better communication among all the constituencies: not only MCC and the cultural community, but also audiences, the city planners, the business community, legislators, arts advocates, and within the cultural community itself.

For its part, the Council reassured attendees that it would keep intact the

integrity of the former councils' (MCAH and MALC) grant awarding process: centralized, merit based, peer panel review, alongside decentralized funding through local arts lottery councils.

While many organizations were greatly relieved to hear that Merit Aid grants would be rolled over for a third year, they were also warned that there is little guarantee that the funding will be as high as FY90, the current fiscal year which ends June 30. There was great concern expressed regarding the lack of FY91 funding programs for organizations not currently receiving Merit Aid.

Particularly difficult for the field, speakers announced, is the suspension of most of the agency's contemporary arts programs. People expressed regret

the loss of a program which was, when granted, a "stamp of approval" for risk-taking programming.

Some of the other major issues raised:

- a greater need to educate the public/develop new audiences;

- direction for cities and towns to incorporate a cultural plan into long range planning;

- a stronger focus on education, developing an understanding and appreciation of culture in children;

- the importance of sustaining successful, proven programs over new, innovative programs;

These observations, along with lots of unanswered questions, will guide the Council board and staff as they rethink former policies and programs.

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